

DANGEROUS LIAISONS - FURNITURE & FASHION

TEAM CJS - INITIAL CONCEPT BOARD

MUSE - SMOKE ARMCHAIR BY MAARTEN BAAS FOR MOOOI



CONCEPT NARRATIVE

In 2004, the Metropolitan Museum of Art's "Dangerous Liaisons: Fashion and Furniture in the 18th Century" exhibition captivated attendees, transporting them to a world filled with ornate gowns and delicately crafted furniture. Inspired by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos' novel "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," the exhibition recalled an era where fashion and furniture represented ideals of beauty and pleasure. This period marked the birth of true high dressmaking, or haute couture, and the luxurious gowns and ornate furniture pieces reflected the decadence and power plays of the French elite.

The MET's description of "Dangerous Liaisons" stated, "the exhibition explores the dressed body's spatial negotiation of the eighteenth-century interior as a choreography of seduction and erotic play." Indeed, Rose Bertin, Queen Marie Antoinette's personal couturier and quite likely the world's first fashion designer, created large ostentatious gowns that ensured their wearer occupied at least three times as much space as their male counterpart, making the woman a more imposing presence. Naturally, the queen was a trendsetter, and Bertin's designs spread in Paris like(wild)fire.

That same year, just a mere five miles from the MET, the Moss gallery opened a solo exhibition titled "Where There's Smoke," showcasing 25 pieces of furniture by Maarten Baas. Originally his graduation project, Baas created a controversial collection by burning and then preserving furniture, from famous design pieces to everyday objects.

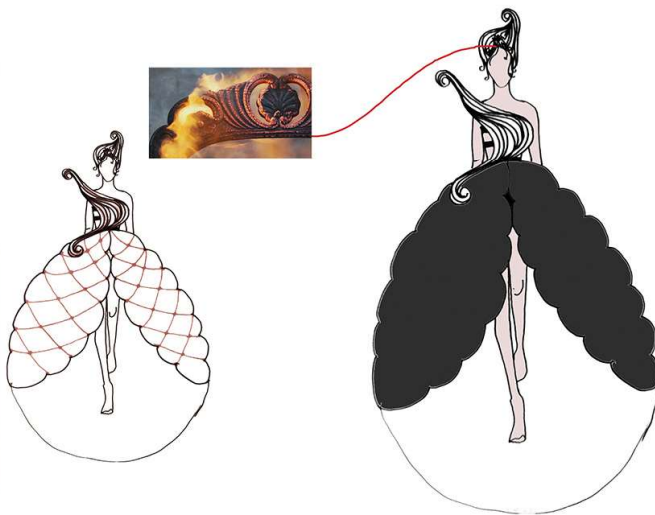
"People tend to hold on to what they have, without wanting things to change," Baas explained. "We don't often see any value in the process of change. Damage has to be repaired to maintain the original concept: symmetrical, shiny, and tight. [...] The oppressive idea that things have to remain the same had to be turned upside down. What happens to a piece of furniture when you treat it in a way that is neither a 'should' nor an 'intention'? – That was the [idea behind] Smoke."

"Instead of picking a piece of furniture as it was, or trying to restore it to its original state, I burn it."

Just like "Les Liaisons Dangereuses," Baas's work has been considered both scandalous and revolutionary, both questioning the status quo then and now. Similarly, like 18th century couturiers, and using the Smoke chair as our muse, our goal is to create a gown that is a statement piece and a challenge to conventional ideas. What happens at the cross-section of furniture and fashion? What happens when we forgo conventional dressmaking materials and use components traditionally reserved for interior design? We intend to create an outfit that blends historical elegance with modern deconstruction, paying homage to Baas's "Smoke" series and Laclos's world—a true Dangerous Liaison.

SKIRT AND TRAIN

- The overskirt inspired by dresse from the 18th century
- Satin fabric filled with foam liner from Drapery Industries and tufted like the backrest of the smoke armchair
- LED Lights sewn into tufted seams to evoke the process of charring



BODICE

- Shape of the bodice is inspired by the curves in the arms of the chair
- Bent wood imitating the back of chair provided by Source
- Recreating the charred pattern of wood using integrated lights
- Using leather straps and buckles to secure the bodice



UNDERSKIRT

- Boning representative of the hoop skirts from the 18th century
- Faux leather from Drapery Industries



HAIR AND ACCESSORIES

- The shape of the large updo is inspired by the curves of the chair and adorned by a crown resembling the ornamental design of the top of the chair

